

Colorado River Basin

Modernizing Agricultural Water Management in the Lower Gunnison River Basin: A Cooperative Approach to Increased Water Use Efficiency and Water Quality Improvement

Lead Partner: The Colorado River Water Conservation District

This project harnesses local innovation occurring within the agricultural and water communities and integrates activities to accelerate a common mission of utilizing water resources wisely while ensuring agricultural and endangered species sustainability. Although similar activities (improvement in conveyance, delivery, on-farm irrigation) have been occurring in the Lower Gunnison sub-basin, they have been primarily limited, disparate efforts without a unifying 'grand design' and without leadership from local producers. This proposal integrates activities and brings together a diversity of partners under a coordinated leadership team to achieve greater water efficiency results and multiply environmental benefits. In addition to water quantity benefits, the partners will use information from a recent Conservation Innovation Grant and national Selenium Soil Interpretation Model to target areas with high selenium. The project also supports a USFWS Programmatic Biological Opinion.

Verde River Flow and Habitat Restoration Initiative

Lead partner: The Nature Conservancy

Project partners in the Verde River Valley of Arizona will aim to improve irrigation water management and irrigation water delivery on acres, enhance riparian habitat, and protect agricultural lands through conservation easements over five years. Easements will be focused on lands that have significant investment in on-farm conservation practices and are critical to ensure long-term investments are protected. The lead partner has been working in the Verde Valley for three years investment in improving conveyance infrastructure, which will now enable this effort with greater on-farm focus.